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Agrarian Distress, Altruistic Suicide, and Agriculturists in India: A Sociological Study of *Sherdil: The Pilibhit Saga* (2022)

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Abstract

The promises of Swaminathan's Green Revolution have almost vanished now as the country faces agrarian distress. In India, not only the farmers are facing distress, but also the sector of agriculture is heading towards a perennial crisis. The present article, through Srijit Mukherji's *Sherdil: The Pilibhit Saga* (2022), proposes to analyse the Indian agrarian distress in the twenty-first century. The film is based on the events faced by the people of *Jhundao*, a village near Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh, India. The primary objective of the work is to investigate the reason for suicide in the protagonist *Gangaram* (Pankaj Tripathi) of the film, and its association with contemporary Indian agriculturists. The article also tends to explore the cinematic representations of farmers in India. The article employs Émile Durkheim's (1858-1917) theory of altruistic suicide that he propounds in his book *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897) to understand the intricacies of fatal decisions made by the agriculturists of the country. *India's agricide: Transition from an agrarian to a non-agrarian economy* published by the Centre for Science and Environment (2022), and P. Sainath's film *Nero's Guests* (2009) work as background documents for formulating arguments regarding the contemporary agrarian situation of India.

Keywords: Agrarian Distress, Altruistic Suicide, **A**griculturist, Farmers in India, Sherdil: The *Pilibhit Saga*.